



State of Connecticut

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STATE CAPITOL

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Government Administration and Elections Committee

Senator Gayle Slossberg, Co-Chair

Representative Russell Morin, Co-Chair

MEMBER

FINANCE, REVENUE AND BONDING COMMITTEE
JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

FROM: Representative Richard A. Smith, 108th Assembly District

DATE: March 7, 2011

RE: HB 5236 – An Act Permitting the State to Sell Advertising Space

I would like to thank the Honorable Co-Chairs, Senator Slossberg and Representative Morin, the Vice-Chairs, Senator Meyer and Representative Lesser, and the Ranking Members, Senator McLachlan and Representative Hwang, and the entire membership of the Government Administration and Elections Committee for their time this morning.

I appreciate being given the opportunity to testify in support of HB 5235, An Act Permitting the State to Sell Advertising Space. This bill is intended to be a "thinking outside the box" approach to increasing revenue to our state without increasing the tax burden on its residents. As our world becomes more digitally focused, I believe we should be monetizing our state's online assets. Though rare, this is not an unprecedented occurrence. Already in Connecticut a few state agency websites use advertising, including Bradley Airport and the state's official tourism website. Also, around the country the following websites have used this method to some extent:

- Cook County, Illinois Assessor's Office
- Washington State Department of Commerce
- Oregon Department of Transportation
- The California Travel and Tourism Commission

It is unfortunately difficult to predict the potential revenue due to several variables, including the amount and type of advertising allowed, the advertisement's size and placement on the website, the sales model used, and the amount of traffic to the website. However, the state of Washington's



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Department of Transportation recently did a study in which they projected their best case scenario to earn more than \$1 million annually for just that one website.

Aside from the added revenue benefit, this bill will create a more business friendly atmosphere for our state. This would also allow for the solicitation of local Connecticut businesses to advertise on our state websites. Not only will they be reaching almost exclusively local consumers, but we will be encouraging growth of Connecticut owned and operated businesses.

Thank you for giving consideration to favorable passage of HB 5236. As always, I am happy to provide additional information or answer any questions you may have.